

File

SAIGON BASE  
MONTHLY REPORT  
MAY 1969

I. GENERAL

1. With only 6755 revenue block hours, May 1969 was our lowest month in over two years. This we attribute to several factors:

a. The general decline in U.S. military and non-military activities since the commencement of the Paris Peace Talks;

b. The normal end-of-the-fiscal year doldrums which affect all U.S. Government activities;

c. A change in customer requirements which has put the Helios and Caribous out of business and is about to close out the Beech C-45's.

2. The new fiscal year should begin at a fairly stable level of approximately 6500 monthly revenue block hours. Since it is too early to make a more solid forecast, we are watching the trend closely with a view to reducing our resources should there be any further cutbacks. Although precipitate action right now would be unwise, especially while "the road ahead" is not yet too clear we are nevertheless letting normal attrition reduce our manpower gradually and painlessly.

3. Viet Cong terrorism and other harrassments continue with occasional in-bound rocket and mortar ordnance to keep things tensed up, but the over-all level of conflict appears to have been reduced to that which prevailed before the infamous 1968 TET offensive. The "celebration" of Ho Chi Minh's birthday on 19 May did not materialize as advertised except for a brief increase in terrorism in Saigon and other populous cities.

4. Twenty-five [redacted] candidates and fifteen alternates have been selected from test results to attend Air America's formal technical training course at AMB Tainan. It is expected initial student input will commence within thirty days.

II. FACILITIES DEVELOPMENT

1. Contracts were signed for a Fire Brigade Station and a Toilet and Shower Facility at Saigon Base. Both projects are underway.

2. The West Ramp Paving Project is nearing completion (80% paved) and should be usable by the end of June.

3. The Cafeteria Annex will be ready for business approximately 1 July 69. This facility will be superior in size and equipment to the original Cafeteria. It will have a Vietnamese Menu featuring a VN\$60 lunch whereas the Main Cafeteria, because of lower volume of business will continue [redacted]

4. The Revetment Wall project is now being erected by RGMD. Footings and columns are being poured. The Base Area Lighting Project will get underway when materials arrive from Japan.

It should be noted that the Saigon Electric Power Company is preparing a

proposal to provide Air America with an additional 200 KVA of badly needed power; a Proforma AR will be initiated upon receipt of the proposal.

5. A & M Enterprise completed the South Ramp Revetment Wall Project. The Utilities Building is well underway. The TSN Common Use Water Well and Distribution Systems jointly funded by AAM, PAA and AVN via advanced water rent will start soon.

6. At Danang Station a contract was signed for the erection of the Nose Hangar Leanto. Contractor has begun excavation and foundation work.

At Nha Trang, two contracts were signed, one for the erection of a Nose Hangar Leanto and one for a Parking Lot and Scooter Shed to be located behind the Nose Hangar. Proforma ARs have been initiated for the completion of the Concrete Paving and for a Power Distribution System including a city power hook-up.

### III. FISCAL

1. Customer Relations - A number of routine contacts were made with each of the two primary contracts and no serious problems were encountered. The VN-41 customer requested information on obtaining "carnay cards" for flight crew purchasing of POL for GFA of locations where Esso is not available. The customer was advised that the company cannot obtain these cards - that it is the function and responsibility of customer personnel to provide such for these particular aircraft.

2. General Comments: The subject of the T Reports has come under discussion again, here in Saigon, as it did during my recent assignment in Vientiane. It has been discussed with base management here in Saigon and several department heads passing through Saigon. No one I have discussed the T reports with are able to read them much less effectively use them. It would seem that there is a great cost incurred by the company for a report that serves no great meaningful purpose in the field since it seems a "well guarded secret" just what goes into the various accounts including how allocations are made. Several department heads have expressed a keen dislike at having certain "Base expenses" charged to their particular department, instead of a method of allocation being established to distribute many of these costs to the using departments.

3. The Monthly Base Manager's Report was briefly discussed with the ABM, with the current formats for the T Report and Base Manager's Report, management is unable to determine how the two are related and how they harmonize if they indeed do.

### IV. FLYING

1. Flying time has undoubtedly been the greatest source of perplexity for all. Lack of flying time affects the pilots, and the spasmodic utilization of aircraft induces havoc in crew scheduling and crew manning. At present the morale in the Porter Program is excellent, in the 10-2 Program is good and in the others, comme-ci comme-ca. The VTB Program has proved our biggest

headache. We are confronted with long duty days and low flying time for the pilots. The present utilization factor for manning the VTB has proved useless. We are attempting to counteract these deficiencies with dual qualification. We have dual-qualified quite a few 10-2 pilots into the VTB, but manning has prevented training the VTB pilots into other aircraft. At best it is a "one-at-a-time" deal.

The Helio Program was another source of mal-contentment. That is until we received the order to put the remaining Helios in storage. This allowed full concentration on training those pilots who were covering the spare Helios. The storage of the Helios also gave us an excellent source for Porter Program input. The flight time from the Helio Program was picked up by the Porter Program. This levied an additional requirement for Porter pilots to fill the gap.

2. All plans came to a screeching halt with the proposal of reverting four Junior captains to F/O. This will entail cross training two more VTB pilots and possibly three more Porter pilots from another source. We are at present training two pilots to fill gaps in the C46 program. Since the flight time in the C47 program has deteriorated this is an excellent source. All programs will be reviewed.

#### Beech

1. The Beech program finished the month with approximately 1019 hours. Programmed flight time for June should be about the same. All proficiency and route checks are current at the present. The Beechcraft program had 98 accident and incident free days.

#### C-46

1. Forecast time for the month was 695 hours and actual time was 741 hours. This made a lot of people very happy. Two captains were transferred to Vientiane which put the work on the balance of captains.

2. The customer has indicated that he will increase the utilization of the C46 and cut down on the C47. Time will tell. There were no accidents or incidents for the month.

#### C47

1. Forecast flight time for the C-47 was 942 hours and actual time flown was 653 hours. Few of the assigned pilots made minimums. If the trend continues, serious thought will be given to cross-checking some C47 PIC's in the C46 to spread the time and the wealth more evenly.

#### DHC-4

Caribous are still unemployed. An off-the-top guess projected 121 hours for the month and 77+49 aircraft hours were flown. Captains averaged 38 hours and First Officers 20.

#### H-395

1. During May there were no Helios on contract; however, we flew 31+08 revenue hours of which 12+08 were flown for the 4395 customer and 19 hours for the 0041 customer. The 19 hours resulted from ferrying three helios to 108 (B865-B869 & B857). 12+45 hours of non-revenue were flown. The non-

revenue hours consisted of three proficiency checks one route check 2 airfield check outs and test flights.

2. Three of our cross qualified pilots were deleted from the program, and six were transferred to other programs: five to the PC6C and one to the DHC-4. Of the six remaining captains, 3 are on leave.

3. The AMF did not get 40 hours nor did any of the line captains get 70 hours as the entire program flew only 44 hours total. June looks even more grim unless we can cross-qualify some of our Helio pilots into other programs to enable them to get some flight time and maintain some degree of proficiency.

#### PC6

1. This month lived up to expectations, the PC6 program logged an all-time high of 2385 hours with no accidents or major incidents.

2. Average pilot time was approximately 85 hours with two pilots exceeding the maximum time allowable by four hours each. In one case the PIC informed us of his reaching 90 hours and all efforts to relieve him at VO7 prior to exceeding 100 hours failed. Nha Trang consistently is low time for the PC6 but in this case VTB's in maintenance created a requirement for the Porter. The other PIC was negligent and has been reprimanded.

2. PC6 total time is inflated somewhat due to considerable non-revenue training time being charged to five Helio PIC's transitioning into the PC6. Also FSD VTE flew seven pilot proficiency flight checks during their stay.

3. The transition training of the Helio captains, including line checks, should be completed by 8 June 1969. Interim proficiency checks were flown by the Acting AMF with TPE approval.

4. This action was necessary since final word on Helio PIC transfers to VTE was not received until after FSD pilots were finished and preparing to leave SGN, although we had requested clarification of Helio PIC transfer status several weeks before.

5. The number of duty days per pilot remains high but when high flight time is considered work days are not a morale problem

June should be a repeat of May in flight time, but we will have our manning level to 31 PICs which will permit a more relaxed operation.

6. During May we received excellent maintenance support and all maintenance personnel associated with the PC6 are to be commended. Without their cooperation we would never make it.

#### VTB

1. May aircraft time of 911+40 was approximately 10% short of the projected 1,063. With 19 line captains effective, their average was 55 hours with none in excess of 70 hours. The 5 effective First Officers averaged 39 hours and again no overtime.

The ratio of duty time versus block time is still most undesirable. There has been a change of personnel in the customer Air Operations at VO7 and I expect a noticeable improvement in II Corps.

2. One accident occurred during the month. N3728G at V206 on 27 May 1969 encountered a combination of factors all working together to produce a double propeller to runway accident which is still under investigation.

204B

1. May has shown a slight increase in flight time over last month. The total hours for the month were 1185.

The monthly pilots meeting was held on the 30 of April, 16 pilots attended. The remainder of the pilots will be briefed on the meeting.

2. AMFS/TW Capt. Webb did not make his regular trip to Saigon this month. One interim proficiency check was given by MF/RW. Two route checks and three spot evaluation checks were given; also three SIC training rides were given to Capt. Bengtson. There was no ground school instructor available so the ground school was administered by MF/RW. With the exception of one pilot on sick leave and another on home leave, the program is caught up on all check rides as of this date.

3. The manning level is currently at 32 pilots, one of which is under training. The average pilot's time will be about 80 hours. With this amount of flying time versus pilots available, there is no need to update our manning level.

#### V. OPERATIONS

1. Total revenue block time for May was 900 hours less than April's time. This reduction in flying was due to a lack of cargo to be moved by the VN-41 customer and the termination of all the Helio contracts. Helio time for April was 731 hours versus 31 hours for May. We can expect further reductions in flying time, especially in the C-47 program. The VN-41 customer indicates there will be further cut-backs in cargo flights and wherever possible he will utilize C-46's instead of C-47's.

2. There were 32 controllable delays in May versus 51 in April, but there were 153 less Saigon departures in May. In the coming months we must expect an increase in uncontrollable delays due to weather.

3. There were considerably less GTD complaints during May. We are encouraging users to note their complaints on the GTD trip tickets in an effort to alleviate recurrent problems.

FIC and the Emergency Equipment Room are in good order.

Due to the decrease in revenue flying a study on FOD cost reduction is underway at this time.

4. Flight Time Report (See attachment B)
- Accidents & Incidents (See attachment C)
- Ground Transportation (See attachment D)

#### VI. SAFETY

(See attachment A)

## VII. COMMUNICATIONS

1. Monsoon rains have played havoc with our leased teletype landlines between the exchange at the Tan Son Nhut civil terminal and the Saigon Post Office. Since the first heavy rainfall, these landlines have been intermittently inoperable approximately 70% of the time. The Post Office thus far has been unable to effect permanent repair to the cable. This has required Message Center personnel to route traffic to Bangkok via our CW Link for onward transmission and also to pouch cut message tapes to HKG for entrance into the SEA Teletype Network.

2. Because of the above we have sent a letter through the Embassy Customer to the Director General, Posts and Telecommunications requesting that Air America be permitted to establish a direct full duplex radioteletype circuit, using either VHF or UHF equipment, between Air America and the Post Office. Air America would have full financial responsibility to provide equipment, installation and maintenance. We more than likely would also have to pay a fee for rental of space within the Post Office building. We are not optimistic; PTT has disapproved similar demands from other contractors.

3. The inauguration of the new message format and procedures on April 30th which was necessitated by the change over to the semi-automatic relay system at Cable and Wireless Company, Hong Kong proved to be a relatively easy one and only minor problems were encountered. Saigon M/C personnel had been well briefed by C/Comm-SVN [REDACTED] and any questions regarding proper procedures and techniques were quickly and efficiently solved by advice and guidance from C&W personnel.

4. A burn-in period of approximately four or five months will be required to ensure that all procedures are understood and used effectively before C&W will convert to the full time and completely computerized automatic relay of traffic for the Company's SEA Teletype Network.

5. This period can be reported as favorable. Major projects long delayed by interlocking with each other and with other facilities development projects are now showing progress. Primary to such progress was course the satisfactory compromise of funding difficulties. The only major remaining difficulty is the establishment of adequate facilities in the communication center to accommodate the expansion now within the grasp of reality.

	<u>Message Traffic</u>	
	April	May
Incoming	9912	10436
Outgoing	12969	12854

## VIII. TRAFFIC/AAM

1. TMSGN has remained in the position of SRTM as additional duty during the reporting month. [REDACTED] reportedly expires 14 June 1969.

In regard to the above position TMSGN made two visits during the month, the first to Can Tho and then second to Danang.

Loss of equipment at NhaTrang has been attributed to thievery by one of the Traffic employees and proper property control is now underway.

2. A request by TMSGN to have porter seats remodified by addition of an extra track lock was turned down by Saigon QC. Separate correspondence will be forthcoming in this regard.

3. The average of daily passengers handled was 395. Monthly total for May was 12,252, an decrease of 11.07% from last month. Company cargo handled for the month of May was 286,236 lbs which was an increase of 21,48% from the last month. Total CAX outgoing cargo handled for May was 21,077 lbs, which was an increase of 124.65% from the last month.

4. As stated previously we are experiencing difficulty in hiring acceptable replacement agents. Six applicants meeting the requirements have been approved for hire but thus far none have shown for duty. Personnel has been requested to assist in this matter as the vacation season is approaching and the remaining agents are due annual leave.

5. Customers use of plush Burns seats on the C-47 Can Tho runs is presenting difficulty in the safe stowage of baggage/cargo during flight. This is under discussion between base and customer; and the customer has been informed that we are required to refuse baggage in some instances due to the lack of adequate tie-down area.

6. Statistics -	April	May
Passenger departures - SGN (All contracts)	6,144	5,539
Passenger arrivals - SGN (All contracts)	7,633	6,713
Outbound cargo - SGN	116,067	135,663
Inbound cargo - SGN	119,553	150,573

7. Traffic/USAID

	(Cargo including AF Caribou A/C)	
	April	May
Outbound (lbs) SGN	1,544,585	1,317,907
Inbound (lbs) SGN	80,117	50,522

IX. HOSTEL OCCUPANCY

During May 1969, 97 beds were occupied out of 165 for a percentage of 58.7% occupancy. Also during this period, nine non-avail. slips were issued. Since 22 May until approximately 6 Sept 69, the occupancy rate will be computed at a six beds per day basis as the Hostel Custodian will be on Home Leave during this period.

X. PERSONNEL

1. Apart from routine activities, a large amount of time was spent on work relating to the impending technical training course [REDACTED] in Tainan. Applicants were interviewed and tested during the first half of the month. Testing of non-Company applicants was conducted in RVN vocational school classroom space provided by the Ministry of Labor. DTT Max A Mims visited; evaluated and selected candidates; and met with RVN government officials, together with APM, GAM and PM, for the purpose of promoting and keeping alive interest in the program.

2. The Ky Con Employment Office was closed on 29 May. Local employment activities are being handled from the Phu Kiet Office temporarily until such time as a suitable location can be found.

See Personnel Strength (Attachment E)

#### XL. MEDICAL

Number of sick call : 1882

Accident: 70, and one of them was considered to be serious

Mr. R.B. Hohmann - RMD Crew Chief - On May 22, 1969 Mr. Hohmann was installing transmission cowling of a helicopter and while the main motor running at 90 percent for purpose of tacking tail motor Mr. Hohmann slipped from left engine deck fell and struck back of his head on left passenger step. He was taken into Base Clinic immediately with 4 inches laceration posterior skull with profuse bleeding but conscious. He was then taken to the US 3rd Field Hospital and later transferred to 24th Evacuation Hospital at Long Binh. Doctor reports stated that he suffered a compound depressed skull fracture and his general condition is good. Operation was performed on May 24th and his condition was good. He was evacuated to Yokota, Japan on May 29th and then airevacuated by chopper to Yososuka Naval Hospital where he is now hospitalized. As recommended by doctor in Long Binh that Mr. Hohmann will remain in Japan for about two weeks convalescence and after that time he will probably be able to return to Saigon. Upon return he will have to make periodic check up visits to Long Binh until full recovery.

2. Hospitalized sick call: 2

Hospitalized accident : 1

Unhospitalized accident: 69

Outcalls: 3

Physical examination:	Flight crew phy.	34
	Pre-employment phy.	38
	Accident flight phy.	0
	Total:	72

Sanitation - Water exam. - Satisfactory

Cafeteria Fair

Toilet Fair

Vaccination: 37

Total man days lost by reasons of sickness - 298½ days

Total man days lost by reasons of accident - 78 days

#### XII. SECURITY

1. The extensive security precautions had been taken by Vietnamese Government throughout Saigon and Gia Dinh province to prevent VC terrorist activities and possible demonstration on the Commemorative of the Buddhist birthday which took place on 30 May 1969. VC had intensified their terrorist activities in Saigon and in Gia Dinh province causing 9 incidents as follows:

- Six TNT blasts that damaged three electric transformer stations; the Dien Hong overpass near the Saigon Central market; the Gia Dinh Information Service.

- Two attempted attacks the 5th Police Precinct and a sub-police station of the 3rd precinct with TNT charge.

at Van Don populated area of the 4th Precinct.

2. The curfew at Tan Son Nhut airport is from 1930L-0630L.

3. Due to the escalation of the cost of living under these circumstances in Saigon, civil servants and servicemen will receive a 25-30 percent increase on their basic salaries. This increase will be effective from 1st July 1969.

### XIII. TECHNICAL SERVICES

1. A welcome decrease was made in the percentage of maintenance delays versus aircraft departures this month. The delays chargeable to maintenance at Saigon Base was only nine (9) for the 1058 departures. One these should be charged to the pilot, when he refused to accept a C-47, because the electric starter was inoperative at departure. The Flight Manual clearly states this is a "GO" item, if the manual engage system is working. This was a SGN/DNG RON flights with no stops in between. Even with this extra delay, the nine delays is a record low, unequalled for over a year at Saigon. (had 28 in April).

2. Our new Cafeteria Annex Building will open for business on 9 July 1969. This building will seat 90 employees at a time, (the Main Cafeteria Building seats 80). All food services will be moved to the Cafeteria Annex on 9 July. At this time, we will perform some renovations general cleaning, painting and rescreening the windows and doors. This work will take about 2-3 weeks and then we will operate both buildings.

with a daily low priced special lunch for 60\$VN. All employees will be welcome to eat in either of the two Cafeterias, depending on their personal choices.

3. Additional toilet facilities are finally under construction for the RMD hangar area. This amounts to two stools and two sinks for the ladies, four stools, six urinals and a large oval hand wash basin for the men, plus two shower stalls adjoining the men's room. The facility is located between the RMD hangar and the RMD Shops Building at the west end. This is a long awaited and highly appreciated addition to the facilities.

The flying hours for the month were down to a total of 7018:40 with the following breakdown by types:

PC6C	2384:29	C-46	741:18
204B	1185:22	C-47	653:24
102/C45	1019:59	DHC-4	77:49
VTE-18	911:40	H395	42:39

#### Company Services

	April	May
Transit	390	287
Overnight	760	633
No. 1 Service	27	21
No. 2 "	28	21
No. 3 "	5	7
No. 4 "	2	3
Engine Change	25	22

Line Items

	April	May
Requisitions	2330	3052
Receipts	3191	3154
Store Issues	6901	7013
Stock Credits	810	991
Posted to cards	19526	20539

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY  
E. J. THEISEN  
ABM - SGN

E.J. Theisen